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DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH SERVICES  
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April 29, 2004

The Honorable Board of Supervisors  
County of Los Angeles  
383 Kenneth Hahn Hall of Administration  
500 West Temple Street  
Los Angeles, California 90012

Dear Supervisors:

**TEMPORARY MEDICAL PERSONNEL SERVICES AGREEMENT AMENDMENT**  
(All Districts) (3 Votes)

**IT IS RECOMMENDED THAT YOUR BOARD:**

1. Delegate authority to the Director of Health Services, or his designee, to amend a form agreement for respiratory care services (as listed in Attachment C), with temporary personnel registry agencies to establish rates that are consistent with the minimum level paid to the registry agencies for respiratory care services by non-County providers. These services will be performed at an estimated cost of \$1 million, effective upon Board approval through June 30, 2005, with two one-year automatic renewals through June 30, 2007.
2. Delegate authority to the Director of Health Services, or his designee, upon review and approval of County Counsel and the Chief Administrative Officer, to negotiate and execute form agreements with any additional registry agencies for respiratory care services that are willing to agree to the County's terms and conditions, and so notify the Board of Supervisors.

**PURPOSE/JUSTIFICATION OF THE RECOMMENDED ACTIONS:**

These actions will enable Department of Health Services (DHS or Department) to secure temporary medical personnel at a reasonable rate and in numbers sufficient to assure continued provision of respiratory care services without threat of interruption to needed patient care. (See Attachment B for proposed agreement rates, by discipline, service level, and service type.)

In exchange for the increased contract registry rates, the contractors are extending the agreement term beyond June 30, 2005, with two automatic one-year extensions.

FISCAL IMPACT/FINANCING:

The estimated net County cost for these amendments is \$1 million, for the period commencing upon Board approval through June 30, 2005. Funding for this agreement is available for the remaining two months in the Department's Fiscal Year 2003-04 Adopted Budget through existing salary savings. Funding will be requested in future fiscal years through June 30, 2007.

FACTS AND PROVISIONS/LEGAL REQUIREMENTS:

Background

For a number of years, the County has contracted with Board-approved registry agencies for the provision of as-needed and part-time medical personnel services to address critical staffing shortages, peak workloads, unexpected emergencies, and vacation coverage at DHS facilities. There are seven such agreements for the following services: radiology, respiratory care, home health, temporary medical support, neurological testing, mobile lithotripsy and temporary specialty medical.

On December 19, 2000, the Board approved form renewal agreements which resulted in the Department's existing contractor list (Attachment C). On June 17, 2003, the Board approved one-year extension amendments through June 30, 2004.

Respiratory Care personnel are highly in demand by both public and private sector hospitals. For example, Hollywood Presbyterian Medical Center is offering a \$2,000 sign-on bonus. In addition to a sign-on bonus of \$1,000, Kindred Hospital is offering various discount programs including a Bally Sports Clum Discount Program. Other out of the area California hospitals are offering up to \$5,000 as a signing bonus. The University of California at San Francisco Medical Center's hourly salary range for respiratory care therapist is \$32.50 to \$53.68, double the County's salary rate.

Current Status

County contract rates for the temporary medical personnel services category of respiratory care are significantly below the market rate. Because this service is in demand and the County's rates are not competitive, it is difficult, if not in some cases impossible, to secure these temporary medical personnel services through our agreements. Rather than jeopardize operations, DHS facilities have, in some instances, utilized the purchase order process to secure temporary medical personnel services and pay the market rate.

The Department is requesting a rate increase for the temporary medical personnel services listed on Attachment B. The current County rates have not been raised since December 15, 1998.

## **Respiratory Care**

The County's contracted hourly rates for respiratory care personnel are well below those charged and received by registries from non-County providers. The County's contract rate for Respiratory Care Practitioners is \$29 per hour while the registries charge and receive from \$51 to \$72 per hour from non-County providers. From July 1, 2003 through December 31, 2003, Harbor/UCLA has requested temporary respiratory care personnel every weekend night. The registries have been unable to supply any personnel. OV/UCLAMC requested temporary respiratory care personnel a minimum of 47 times during the same time period with the registries unable to supply any.

The attached schedule (Attachment D) compares the County's contract rates to the non-County provider rates, by discipline, service type and position level.

The Department intends to offer amendments to the current contractor registry pool, which provide this temporary medical service to the DHS facilities, Sheriff's Department and other County departments, as needed. The Department also intends to allow other interested registries the opportunity to contract with the County, once qualified by our DHS facilities and reviewed and approved by County Counsel and the Chief Administrative Office. The Department will notify the Board of Supervisors of these additional registry contracts. These contract services will continue to be utilized only for the most critical Department functions for which County employees and County re-employment list personnel are not available to provide this service. The Department will continue to canvass qualified employees on the County's Re-employment List to determine potential interest in providing as needed or part-time services.

These amendments include provisions requiring each provider to have a risk management or loss prevention plan prior to commencing services and to comply with all County standard indemnification and insurance requirements.

The form amendment has been reviewed by the Department of Human Resources, affected unions, Employee Relations, and participating Department facilities.

Attachments A, B, C and D provide additional information.

County Counsel has approved the form amendment as to use and form.

### **CONTRACTING PROCESS:**

This personnel service is on a temporary, as-needed basis to allow facilities to provide critical patient care service during staffing shortages. The Department has attempted to recruit for this highly competitive service, but has been unsuccessful. The Department will continue to attempt to fill its respiratory care vacancies.

Although this category of personnel service is being addressed in this Board action, the Department intends to return to the Board to request rate increases for other temporary medical personnel services items in the near future.

**SUMMARY OF AGREEMENT**

1. **TYPE OF SERVICE:**

As-needed and part-time medical personnel services.

2. **TERM:**

The amendments will become effective upon Board approval and continue through June 30, 2005, with provisions for two one-year automatic renewal periods ending on June 30, 2007.

3. **FINANCING INFORMATION:**

The estimated net County cost of the agreements is \$1 million for the period commencing upon Board approval through June 30, 2005. Funding for this agreement is available for the remaining two months in the Department's Fiscal Year Adopted 2003-04 Budget through existing salary savings and will be requested in future fiscal years.

4. **ACCOUNTABILITY FOR MONITORING:**

The administrators and medical directors at the DHS facilities and at the Sheriff's Department where services are provided will continue to monitor the contractor's performance.

5. **APPROVALS:**

Health Services Administration: Fred Leaf, Chief Operating Officer

Contract Administration: Irene E. Riley, Director

County Counsel (approval as to form): Sharon A. Reichman, Senior Deputy County Counsel

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cba:03/31/04

**PROPOSED AGREEMENT RATES**

**New Flat Rate**

**Respiratory Care**

|  |         |
|--|---------|
| Respiratory Care Practitioner (Resp. II) | \$51    |
| Respiratory Care Practitioner (Resp. I)  | \$42    |
| Pediatric/Neonatal                       | \$48.25 |
| Interim Permittee                        | \$38    |

**ATTACHMENT C**

**EXISTING CONTRACTORS**

**CONTRACT NO.**

Reliable Health Care Services  
The Registry Network, Inc., dba RTS/Medi-Temps

H-207304-3  
H-211940-3

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cba:03/31/04

RATE COMPARISON SCHEDULE  
FOR SELECTED CONTRACTED SERVICES  
AS OF APRIL 1, 2004

ATTACHMENT D

| SERVICE<br>TYPE  | CONTRACT<br>HOURLY<br>RATE | PROPOSED<br>RATE | CONTRACTOR<br>RATE<br>RANGE |
|--|----------------------------|------------------|-----------------------------|
| <b>RESPIRATORY CARE</b>  |                            |                  |                             |
| Respiratory Care Practitioner (Respiratory II)<br>(Pediatric/Neo-natal Care Services)<br>(Floor/Critical Care)         | \$29.00                    | \$51.00          | \$51-72                     |
| Respiratory Care Practitioner (Respiratory I)<br>(Pediatric/Neo-natal Care Services)<br>(Floor/Critical Care Services) | \$26.00                    | \$42.00          | \$42-46                     |
|  |                            | \$48.25          | \$48.25                     |
| Interim Permittee  | \$26.00                    | \$38.00          | \$38.00                     |